and research institutions, which have done good work in the past. A Task Force headed by Dr. M. S. Swaminathan has recommended the creation of a National Fund for Strategic Agricultural Research. The Union Budget for 2005-06 has announced an initial provision of Rs.50 crore for operationalizing this fund.

Plantation and Horticultural land Damaged in A&N Islands

3891. SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the area of plantation and horticultural land damaged or affected in Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to earthquake-cum-Tsunami on 26th December, 2004;

(b) the number of coconut trees and arecanut trees damaged there;

(c) whether there is any scheme formulated by Government to compensate the losses of coconut and arecanut trees sustained by the Islanders; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) An area of 10,500 hectares of plantation and horticultural crop was affected due to earthquake-cum-Tsunami in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands on 26th December, 2004.

(b) A total of 13.50 lakh coconut trees and 5.0 lakh arecanut trees were uprooted/damaged due to Tsunami.

(c) and (d) The Government of India has sanctioned Rs.239.54 crore under Short Term Action programme for restoration and rehabilitation of agriculture activities for Tsunami affected areas. This includes assistance for taking up cropping programmes on horticultural crops covering coconut, arecanut and root crops amounting to Rs.93.22 crores. Besides, assistance has been extended for mitigating crops loss, as per Calamity Relief Fund norms, on the following:—

(i) For reclamation of agricultural land @ Rs.5,000 per hectare.

(ii) For loss of substantial portion of land @ Rs.10,000 per hectare.

(iii) For loss of agricultural/horticultural crops @ Rs.2,000 per hectare.

Pricing of Phosphoric Acid

3892. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not yet started the process of negotiating the price of phosphoric acid which is crucial for the DAP supply;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefore, and by when it is likely to be settled; and

(c) if not, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) Fertilizer raw materials/intermediates including phosphoric acid is free to import in the country. The Phosphatic fertilizer manufacturers are procuring phosphoric acid either from their Joint Ventures abroad or from the international suppliers of phosphoric acid at the price and terms & conditions negotiated by them. The Phosphoric Acid Consumer Group (PACG) formed by the Phosphatic fertilizer manufacturers negotiates the quantity & price of phosphoric acid with the international suppliers on year-to-year basis. PACG has already started negotiations for procuring phosphoric acid during the year 2005-06.

Task Force on Drug Price Control

3893. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up a separate task force to explore